

“Existentialism”

Philosophy 224 (064)

UNC-Chapel Hill

Summer Session II 2007

Caldwell Hall 103

Monday-Friday, 9:45am-11:15am

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Office Hours: Mondays and Thursday 1:30pm-2:30pm or by appointment

The goal of this course is to conduct an in-depth study of two of the best-known philosophers in the so-called continental tradition: Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre. We will engage with the major works of these two thinkers with an eye to the question “what is the human person?” We will evaluate this question on roughly four dimensions:

- 1) What is she?
- 2) How does she relate to her world?
- 3) How should she live her life?
- 4) How does she relate to others?

To summarize, what does it mean for her to be a *human* person as opposed to some other kind of being?

Required Texts:

*Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*, Simon Critchley (Oxford, 2001)

*Being and Time*, Martin Heidegger (SUNY, 1996)

*Being and Nothingness*, Jean-Paul Sartre (Washington Square Press, 1956)

Course Requirements:

Class Participation 25%

Microessay 1 25%

Microessay 2 25%

Final Exam 25%

Class Participation and Reading:

This course is a discussion-based seminar. How much you (and your classmates) get out of it is directly related to how much you (and your classmates) put into it. Please come to class having read the assigned reading for the day and be prepared to ask questions and engage in discussion. The readings for this course are fairly short (averaging 35 pages per day), but they are difficult and dense. You should expect to invest a lot of time into reading and taking notes outside of our class time.

### Papers and the Final Exam:

You are responsible for writing two Microessays. A Microessay, as I will explain in detail when the time comes, is a one-page, single-spaced essay on a standard 8 x 11 sheet of paper with 1 inch margins. Because Microessays are so short, you will be expected to get right to the point. There is absolutely no room for lofty introductions (i.e. "From the dawn of time...") or irrelevant ramblings. For each Microessay you will be given a prompt in the form of a very broad question. Microessays will be graded on a "check" scale (check, check minus, check plus).

The Final Exam will consist of one question that is to be answered in the form of a Microessay. You will be allowed to use your notes and books to answer the question. This being the case, my expectations of you will be high. I will discuss the final exam in more detail as the exam date approaches.

### Films and Field Trips:

We will be watching and discussing four films in this course. The films may not connect up directly to the reading material for the week during which we watch them. I have incorporated films into this course to help illustrate broadly and more concretely the existentialist themes we will be studying. By the end of the course I expect you to be able to integrate your thoughts on the films into your final exam answer.

We will be taking one field trip to Central Prison in Raleigh, NC. I expect you to be able to integrate your experiences at the prison into your final exam answer. Please be advised that on the day of our field trip we will be leaving campus earlier than the start time of our class.

### Class Schedule/Schedule of Readings

Th 6/21	Introductions/Syllabus/Goals and Expectations	CPAVSI
F 6/22	What is Continental Philosophy/Existentialism?	CPAVSI

### Heidegger's Existential Phenomenology

M 6/25	Being and Da-Sein	BT (21-35, 67-77)
Tu 6/26	Being in the World	BT (78-90, 91-107)
W 6/27	The who of Da-Sein	BT (149-168, 210-224)
Th 6/28	Film: <i>American Beauty</i>	
F 6/29	Film Discussion, Weekly Wrap-up	
M 7/2	Death	BT (279-311)
Tu 7/3	Resoluteness	BT (313-348)
W 7/4	No Class	
Th 7/5	Film: <i>Cool Hand Luke</i>	
F 7/6	Film Discussion, Weekly Wrap-up, <b>Microessay 1 due</b>	

## Sartre's Existentialism

M 7/9	Intro to Sartre	“The Humanism of Existentialism” (PDF)
Tu 7/10	Nothingness	BN (33-85)
W 7/11	Bad Faith	BN (86-112)
Th 7/12	Film: <i>Crimes and Misdemeanors</i>	
F 7/13	Film Discussion, Weekly Wrap-up	
M 7/16	Being with Others	BN (471-534)
Tu 7/17	Freedom and Responsibility	BN (557-619)
W 7/18	Freedom and Responsibility	BN (557-619, 707-711, 795-798)
Th 7/19	Film: <i>Fight Club</i>	
F 7/20	Film Discussion, Weekly Wrap-up, <b>Microessay 2 due</b>	
M 7/23	Field Trip to Central Prison	
Tu 7/24	Prison Discussion, Review	
W 7/25	Reading Day, No Class	
Th 7/26	Final Exam, 8-11am	

### Honor Code:

Chancellor Moeser has asked faculty to include the following statement in all course syllabi:

*Academic dishonesty in any form is unacceptable, because any breach in academic integrity, however small, strikes destructively at the University's life and work.*

*The Honor Code and the Campus Code, embodying the ideals of academic honesty, integrity, and responsible citizenship, have for over 100 years governed the performance of all academic work and student conduct at the University. Acceptance by a student of enrollment in the University presupposes a commitment to the principles embodied in these codes and a respect for this most significant University tradition.*

*Your participation in this course comes with my expectation that your work will be completed in full observance of the Honor Code.*